

## PROPOSAL EVALUATION

### *Proposition 50, Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant*

PIN	4816	COUNTY	Merced
APPLICANT	San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority	AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$499,952
PROJECT TITLE	Upper San Joaquin River Conceptual Restoration Plan - Integrated Regional Water Management Plan	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$634,972

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Conduct the third and final phase of the conceptual planning, which will develop an IRWMP for the region.

**WORK PLAN - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has a detailed and specific work plan that adequately documents the proposal. Weighting factor is 3.**

**Score: 9**

**Comment:** This work plan represents Phase 3, completion of the IRWMP. The work plan is broken down by task with deliverables and is consistent with the budget and schedule. The tasks have sufficient detail for the work proposed, even though some tasks are not described in detail. The preliminary work has already been done in the Phase 1. The San Joaquin River Resource Management Coalition and the San Joaquin River Task Force will jointly guide the development and adoption of the IRWMP. One task would form a Stakeholder Advisory Committee that will be made up of representatives from local agencies, as well as State and federal agencies. In the budget, task items are broken down further into subtasks. Consultant labor appears high. The final product does not show an adopted IRWMP but only for a report. Therefore, it appears that additional work would be required after this proposal to complete the IRWMP, which was identified as the purpose of the proposal.

**DESCRIPTION OF REGION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented a detailed and specific description that adequately documents the region. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 4**

**Comment:** The IRWMP is intended to cover over 150 miles of the Upper San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River. The region's boundary was presented on a map. The quality and quantity of the water resources were described. Major water related infrastructure was described well. Social and cultural make up the communities, important cultural or social values, and economic conditions and trends in the region were not addressed.

**OBJECTIVES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific planning objectives. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 8**

**Comment:** The primary objective of the IRWMP is to provide a regionally integrated approach to prioritize, fund, and implement restoration actions/projects that support both environmental and agricultural goals, focusing on enhancements to water supply, water quality, and groundwater conditions. There is also a list of planning objectives that relate to the various issues, such as: flood control; water supply; water quality; groundwater management; land ownership and use; recreation; and aquatic, riparian, wetland, and terrestrial resources. These objectives are intended to be aligned with statewide priorities through coordination with State agencies, but the application does not provide detail about how statewide priorities will be aligned with planning objectives.

**INTEGRATION OF WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented how water management strategies will be integrated. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 6**

**Comment:** Integration of water management strategies builds on Phases 1 and 2. The application states that the participating entities must recognize and support the idea that regional integration will increase water supply reliability. The applicant states that it will develop the IRWMP through the Resource Management Coalition and San Joaquin River Task Force, but does not discuss how this will be done. Strategies were listed that meet IRWM standards; however, a sufficient explanation about how to combine water management strategies to produce synergistic effects was not found. Integration of water quality, fisheries, conservation, wildlife, and other resources could have been better demonstrated.

**IMPLEMENTATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately detailed plan implementation. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 6**

**Comment:** Implementation is apparent from work on Phases 1 and 2. Task 6 of the work plan describes how the implementation phase will be developed. The IRWMP will define those agencies responsible to implement specific projects. A master schedule will show the timing of implementation for specific projects that correspond to the phased development of potential "new" water supplies available under the IRWMP. It is not clear what the schedule will be for other projects, such as restoration projects, and if this process will be used to monitor the projects or the IRWMP. It is uncertain who would be doing the monitoring. There is a statement about adaptive management, but nothing on how it will be used to modify the implementation of the IRWMP.

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**IMPACTS AND BENEFITS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately presented and documented the impacts and benefits of the Plan. Weighting factor is 2.**

**Score: 8**

**Comment:** The proposed IRWMP will use a screening level of analysis for impacts and benefit alternatives but did not discuss the adjacent areas like those downstream the project area that could be impacted by the IRWMP. The projects will also be evaluated as to how they meet federal, statewide, and local planning objectives, including CALFED. The benefits of a regional approach will be compared to individual actions. Socioeconomic factors will also be investigated. A strategy for complying with CEQA will be developed. CEQA compliance is a task item in the work plan as only an overall strategy, but the application does not exactly state what work will be performed. It is anticipated that a Programmatic EIR will provide the foundation for subsequent negative declarations and project specific EIRs. Potential benefits will be developed for each individual implementation; however, cumulative impacts are not discussed.

**DATA AND TECHNICAL ANALYSIS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data and technical analysis components of the proposal. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 5**

**Comment:** Phase 1 of the planning effort was completed in 2003 and is presented in the application. It documents the technical understanding of hydrologic, environmental, water supply, water quality, operational, and physical conditions in the Upper San Joaquin River watershed. Technical data includes historical river flows, maps, seasonal flow patterns, existing water supply and facilities, water quality, as well as other information. Phase 2, which will be completed in October 2005, integrates watershed restoration and water management planning goals, refines the decision framework, and initiates the screening of projects. Portions of Phase 2 memoranda are included.

**DATA MANAGEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data management procedures. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 4**

**Comment:** Much of the data has already been collected and put into Phases 1 and 2. Data will be put into Excel spreadsheets, Access databases, or ArcGIS, depending on what is appropriate. A public website will be used to disseminate information. The applicant fails to address how it will meet statewide data needs.

**STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented stakeholder involvement concerns. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** Stakeholder Advisory Committee, public outreach meetings, and workshops will be advertised. Monthly meetings are the mechanism for stakeholder involvement. A list of participating organizations and agencies is included. Most are listed by the name of the group and include irrigation and water districts and County Farm Bureaus. Some stakeholders appear to be missing, such as environmental groups which are doing the same activities. For example the San Joaquin Parkway and Conservation Trust, which owns conservation land, easements, and has implemented restoration projects, is not included as a partner or stakeholder. Environmental justice concerns will be addressed through the analysis of project impacts and benefits.

**DISADVANTAGE COMMUNITIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented disadvantaged community concerns. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 3**

**Comment:** The region includes a number of DACs, such as the Cities of Firebaugh and Mendota. The median income for the counties involved (Madera, Merced, and Fresno) are all considered disadvantaged. The Stakeholder section states that local city and county agencies will be asked to participate. However, direct benefits to DACs are not discussed. The proposal does not provide specifics to address the water supply or quality needs of the DACs in this region. How the projects may affect DACs will be addressed during the evaluation process.

**RELATION TO LOCAL PLANNING - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented the Plan's relationship to local planning efforts. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score: 2**

**Comment:** There are local county planning policies for Madera, Merced, and Fresno Counties that protect the agricultural economy. The applicant states that general plans conditionally allow water resource restoration actions that do not conflict with approved land use. Many development plans in or near the Upper San Joaquin River corridor require consistency with other plans, such as the San Joaquin River Parkway Plan, or consultation with specific entities, such as the San Joaquin River Conservancy. The proposal only marginally addresses other local planning documents and does not relate water management strategies to local planning documents. General plans for cities were not discussed and it is not clear if these documents will be used to develop the IRWMP.

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**AGENCY COORDINATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented agency coordination issues. Weighting factor is 1.**

**Score:** 4

**Comment:** There is already on ongoing cooperation between local, State, and federal agencies, as demonstrated with their involvement in Phase 1 and 2 of the IRWMP process. The same agencies will be part of the IRWMP through involvement in the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The applicant discussed groups and projects that they are currently coordinating with but did not thoroughly describe how the proposed IRWMP will provide for coordination and cooperation with relevant local, State, and federal agencies in the region or plan components.

**TOTAL SCORE: 62**